

Appl. No. 10/654,789
Amdt. Dated June 4, 2004
Reply to Office action of May 28, 2004

REMARKS

The Applicants have reviewed the Office action dated May 28, 2004 and thank Examiner Dunwoody for his detailed review of the pending claims. In response to the Office action the Applicants have amended claims 1, 4, 8, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19 and 21 and canceled claims 3, 11 and 15. Accordingly, claims 1-2, 4-10, 12-14, and 16-21 remain pending in the present application. In the course of amending the claims no new matter has been added. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office action rejects claim 1-3, 5-11, 14, 15 and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,093,108 to Moulinet. In view of the amendments to independent claims 1, 8, 14, 18, 19 and 21 the Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

To sustain a rejection under §102(b) the reference must teach each limitation of the claimed invention. The Moulinet patent fails to teach each limitation of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Moulinet patent fails to teach the novel limitation of at least one sealing bead located on an end surface of a sealing area. Instead, the Moulinet patent teaches two grooves or channels on a top surface of a sealing area, but fails to teach any beads located on the end surface of the sealing area.

Traditional boot connections have imperfections between the contact surfaces of the boot and the can. Thus, a gap is created in the seal between the two surfaces and contamination or leakage may result. To create a more effective seal it is desirable to have the can contact as much surface as possible of the sealing area of the boot. Accordingly, to prevent gaps from forming between the can and the boot, at least one bead is positioned on the end surface while a second bead is positioned on a top surface. Sealing the can about multiple surfaces of the sealing area generates a more effective seal between the can and the boot.

The Moulinet patent fails to teach each limitation of the independent claims, specifically, a sealing bead on the end surface of the sealing area. Further, the dependent claims add additional features to the patentable independent claims and are also patentable. For at least these reasons remaining claims 1-2, 5-10, 14 and 18-21 are patentable and the Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection.

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Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office action rejects claims 4, 12, 13, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Moulinet. The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection in view of the amendments to the independent claims and the arguments made above with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Further, claims 4, 12, 13, 16 and 17 are dependent claims adding additional features to the patentable subject matter of independent claims 1, 7 and 14. For at least this reason they are patentable.

Additionally, regarding claims 4, 12 and 16, after reviewing the Moulinet patent it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to position the second sealing bead approximately 90° from the first sealing bead. The can in the Moulinet patent does not contact the end surface of the sealing area. Accordingly, there is no need for a sealing bead on the end surface of the sealing area. Regarding the claimed invention, having the can contact both the end surface and the top surface of the sealing area of the boot generates a more effective seal. It is desirable to have a sealing bead positioned on each contact surface to produce an effective seal. Accordingly, the second sealing bead is located approximately 90° from the first sealing bead. For at least this reason, claims 4, 12 and 16 are patentable and the Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection as to claims 4, 12, 13, 16 and 17.

Amendments to the Specification and Drawings

The specification and drawings have been amended to correct for a typographical error noticed by the Applicant during preparation of this Amendment. Element number 44 was inadvertently used for two separate elements – the annular portion and the sealing area. To correct for this error the sealing area is now designated as element number 45. Appropriate portions of the specification and drawings have been corrected.

Conclusion

The Applicants believe the present case is in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner pass the case to issue.

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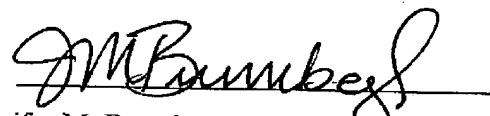
It is believe that there is no fee due with the Amendment. However, if a fee is due please charge deposit account 07-1360 under reference number G00343/US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June 4, 2004

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Enclosures